DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 142 473 SO 010 167

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TITLE	The School in Its Relations with the Community. Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education, Tenth Session.
INSTITUTION	Council of Europe, Strasbourg (France).; Documentation Centre for Education in Europe, Strasbourg (France).
PUB DATE	77
NOTE	47p.; For a related document, see SO 010 166 ; Best copy available
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Education; *Comparative Education; *Data Analysis; Educational Change; Educational Environment; Educational Improvement; *Educational Research; *Educational Trends; Elementary Secondary Education; Futures (of Society); Parent Participation; *School Community Relationship; Social Environment; Sociocultural Patterns
IDENTIFIERS	Europe

ABSTRACT

The report presents a composite analysis of documents relating to school-community relationships which were produced from 1971-77 under the auspices of the Council of Europe. Intended as an educational policy planning aid, the study inventories theoretical approaches and practical problems as they have appeared in recent research documents and identifies areas for further research. The document is presented in eight chapters. Chapter I identifies problems faced by schools in modern society, including social change, student attitudes, and community expectations. Chapters II and III outline the themes and overall views which have marked Council of Europe documents over the past five years. Chapter IV discusses education for the future, including social change, preparation for working life, and self-training. In chapter V, problems which arise from the extension of the school's sphere of action are discussed, followed by description of the school as a participatory community in chapter VI. Chapter VII focuses on adult education, which is described as the most stimulating sector of educational activity over the past 10 years. The final chapter discusses trends and problems of present day school-community relations and identifies values which must guide this relationship in the future, including open-mindedness, creativity, commitment, and autonomy. The appendix lists 45 related documents published by the Council of Europe since 1970. (Author/DB)

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EUROPEAN MINISTERS OF EDUCATION

Tenth Session

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THE SCHOOL IN ITS RELATIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY

Contribution of the Council of Europe

Report prepared by

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SP 010167

CME/X (77) 3

The Ministers of Education have decided that at the Tenth Session of their Standing Conference, to be held in 1977, the main theme for discussion will be "The school in its relations with the community".

In the following study, the documents produced over the past five or six years in or under the auspices of the Council of Europe are analysed, and their contribution to the study of the question is assessed. An inventory of the theoretical approaches and practical problems discussed in those documents is attempted, as well as an overall picture of the trends that emerge. The purpose is to show how matters stand and to identify possible lines of further research for the future.

The author wishes to thank the Secretariat of the Council of Europe for the help he has received in selecting and analysing the documents.

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CHAPTER I : SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

a. The school on trial

The school is not having an easy time. Criticised from without and challenged from within, it is the focus of mounting protest and discontent; and it is not unusual for stricture to become transformed into accusation. Is there a single charge that has not been brought against it at some time or other in the past 15 years? Never in its history has the school as an institution been on such irritable terms with its surroundings. Nor have its relations with its pupils and students ever been so strained.

It has become commonplace to speak of a "crisis in education".

"Crisis" implies that some balance has not been maintained. But what balance? and why has it been upset?

It is very tempting to answer that the school is out of phase with society and to account for all its various shortcomings simply in terms of structural resistance and teacher recalcitrance. This would explain the conflict between school and society, and the way to settle it would be evident, not to say immediately accessible. After the needs of society had been recorded and its values analysed, it would simply remain to devise a suitable structure and change people's attitudes.

The latest coherent embodiment of this conception of the problem is the "research and development" model which caused so many hopes to rise until three or four years ago.

But relationships between the school and its surroundings are far from being assimilable to so simple a pattern.

It is quite clear that schools are created by and for society. It is incontrovertible that society assigns a function to them as it does to any other institutions (in this case, education). And it is also true that the education function is incorporated, as it were, in a contract between the school and society: whether the terms of the contract are or are not explicit and precise, they give an indication of one or more education models, each with an axiology and corresponding pedagogic structures and practices (1).

But in societies as complex as Western societies, the sub-systems are by no means wholly subordinate to the aims of the overall system. A community's major policy objectives are not determined by any central regulating body; their economic and social mechanisms are based on competition and profit, and hence on conflict: by drawing attention to needs and allowing them to be expressed, conflict should be an instrument of rationalisation and adjustment in the balance of power, in other words an essential element of regulation.

Such societies therefore advocate pluralism and admit dissent. This being so, they must also accept contradiction and be ready to compromise, with the result that their objectives can be discerned only hazily and tentatively.

Hazily, because the concepts and values must allow a margin of interpretation in order to ensure wide support for certain rules. In education, for instance, principles such as "democratisation", "equality", "a place in society" and "autonomy" do not mean the same thing to all those who uphold them.

Tentatively, because the fragmentation of social groupings, when problems are analysed and solutions formulated, produces nuances such that any change in the complex interrelationship of shared power will suffice to alter the objectives. Many European countries have experience of successive educational reforms, each of which constitutes, on certain points at least, a negation of the preceding ones.

Haziness is a cause of imprecision in the formulation of ends and means. The tentative approach is a cause of instability. In both cases, problems arise for teachers and for institutions.

b. An ambiguous position

Society has placed high hopes in the education system. If teachers are right in thinking that the institution does not have resources made available to it that are consistent with the community's expectations and demands, it is nevertheless true to say that we provide the school with considerable means.

Nor has there ever been a period in which education has been the subject of so much research and enquiry. At international level (Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO) we have been trying for nearly 15 years to clarify the concepts and identify options. But can anybody claim that the school is given a clear and unambiguous mandate by the community? Or that the international organisations develop themes that are in every case coherent? Or that our proposals and recommendations pay due regard to the feasibility of implementation?

Let us take some examples.

Meeting in the context of the Conference on the Development of Democratic Institutions in Europe (Strasbourg, 21 to 23 April 1976) Commission II (Education Policies and Democracy) drew attention to the fact that, while there is general agreement in governments that civics should be taught, there is still great public and official worry about the teaching of politics (2). But surely it is generally agreed that the school should be required to train every man and woman to become an enlightened and responsible citizen?

Because the requirements are not matched by a willingness to satisfy them, awkward situations and conflicts arise, many of which place teachers in difficult positions.

Towards the end of his report, Mr Bernard Crick mentions a contribution by Professor Langeveld from which it emerges quite clearly that questions arise first and foremost within the community. How far do we want political education to go? And, what is more important, do we want to run the risk of young people using it?

The same document contains a similar remark on the subject of equality, a concept that occurs time and again in statements on the essential objectives of the education system. Some use it to justify a claim that schools can be vehicles of change, while others simply express the hope, in the name of equality, that schools should not frustrate innovation through bad organisation (3).

These subtle distinctions help to explain why the teaching body finds it so difficult to adopt a coherent and effective attitude to this problem.

As a third example, we could take the theme of participation. Here again, participation is generally presented as a demand which schools are urgently called upon to meet, while society on the whole takes very little interest in participation and so fails to provide schools with any models they might copy. Can schools be criticised for not devising, for partners who by definition differ in status, a type of relationship which the community is unable to create between theoretically equal individuals?

c. Education as an institution

Let us also not overlook the fact that education is an institution, and one of the largest institutions in Europe in terms of the number of people employed. Until very recently, it enjoyed high prestige, largely because it stood for tradition and a certain form of permanence.

One must expect an "establishment" of this order - which, incidentally, itself trains its future members - to develop its own specific attitudes, values and demands, and to maintain dialectic relationships of mutual influence and adjustment with the community and society.

For various reasons, which are simultaneously social, philosophical and intellectual, the core of our education systems (secondary education, currently called general education) developed historically in Europe in association with what is commonly called classical humanism, as a form of teaching detached from the contingent world outside and devoted to the pursuit of all that is stable and permanent in man and in nature.

On this model, the school has traditionally been considered in the West as an institution whose ability to fulfil its function depended on how well it could keep its distance from the world. To safeguard its serenity, it readily effected detachment with regard to the problems of the day, and organised itself in a closed environment, protected from the realities, contradictions and conflicts of social life, by developing a "neutral culture". Thus it came to regard itself as an institution with its own objectives, not necessarily in keeping with the community's expectations and requirements. This conviction that the school has a specific mission and must therefore assert its autonomy in regard to its environment and, in certain cases, resist the pressures which the environment exerts on it, is without doubt one of the factors which must be taken into consideration in any study of school-community relations.

These considerations and facts, taken together, show that the problem of relations between the school and the community cannot be stated in simple terms.

Western society claims to be pluralistic and outward-looking. Pluralism implies the co-existence of different moral codes and the possibility of variety not only in the choice of means but also in the targets that groups set for themselves and urge society as a whole to adopt. An outward-looking society must turn its face towards the future, towards that which is not yet, towards that which can only be anticipated, accepted or desired. Such a society is constantly inquiring and constantly moving, and is more attentive to what must be changed than to what it wishes to conserve.

Each of these characteristics poses problems for education.

It is not always easy for schools to distinguish between a fundamental trend and an episodic phenomenon; similarly, it is extremely difficult for them to tell the difference between a movement worthy of encouragement and a rising that is better held in check.

Mr Bertrand Schwartz quite rightly observes that, in a sense, conflict between any society and its educational system is a normal phenomenon (4) since the educational system is "invariably left behind and overwhelmed by the tide of ideas and behaviour which are the signs that a society is alive".

There is a further aspect here which seems to me fundamental: in so far as the community requires its schools to bring their teaching up to date so as to approach questions which are essential to that community's life and central to its conflicts, there is a risk that schools will become places where young people do not simply take note of those conflicts in an academic manner: they will, without any doubt, wish to translate them, in their own way, into terms of life. Is society ready to take this risk?

CHAPTER II : FOUR THEMES

In inquiring into the contribution of the Council of Europe to the study of this problem - and I have tried to show just how complex and full of pitfalls the problem is - one is bound to ask this question : from all the documents produced by the Council of Europe in the course of its work, what composite view can one derive of the problems that arise in school-community relations? In other words, what reciprocal complaints and demands can be gathered from the studies conducted at the initiative of the Council for Cultural Cooperation and its committees? Before answering these questions, however, it would be helpful to digress and depict the general framework in which the debate takes place.

Four major themes can be identified around which our discussions on relations between education and the community all revolve.

a. Interdependence of school and community

From the late fifties onwards, emphasis was placed on the interdependence of school and community, and this concern was reflected in the work of the Council of Europe and that of OECD.

With the faster pace of economic and social change and the progress of technology, people became aware that the school could not play its part unless it remained in touch not only with present-day science but also with the evolution of material data and aspirations.

In 1961, the Council of Europe organised a course in Brussels on "The adaptation of methods and curricula to modern living conditions, with special reference to new educational and vocational training trends".

What was the school required to do? Renovate its structures in order to achieve democratisation, that is to say access to secondary education for all children; adapt its curricula to the advance of science and to the new socio-economic needs; and amend its methods so as to offer all individuals opportunities for study consistent with their abilities.

Some major subjects were already beginning to emerge; the discrepancy between secondary education and the needs of the time; the coincidence between increasing individual demand and the growth of social demand; the interdependence of socio-economic progress on the one hand and the higher school-leaving age, the higher standard of education of the population and curriculum reform on the other; the importance of pupil guidance and vocational guidance; the need for versatility; and the reappraisal of "classical" education, the humanities, etc.

A good account of the stage reached by the early sixties can be found in a comparative study on pupil guidance published by M. Reuchlin in 1964 (5).

Subsequently this concept of the interdependence of school and community was narrowed down and refined and it was not long before the idea prevailed that, for man, living was a process of continual adjustment between himself and his surroundings. "In so far as its purpose is to enable the individual to comprehend his environment", we read in the introductory report to the Pont-à-Mousson symposium (1972), 'education must necessarily be continuous because environmental change is continuous" (6).

At the same symposium, Mr. Vatier defined four strategic principles for educational renewal, the first of which was that: "school would help men in their lives only if it was not cut off from the outside world" (7).

But two concepts in particular, that of permanent education and that of socio-cultural community development ("animation") - concepts which have occupied an important place in the activities of the Council of Europe over the past five or six years and to which we will return later - proved to offer the most promising approach to this theme. The study of these two concepts, conducted with the most commendable diligence, gave rise to the idea that a person's success in fitting into his surroundings depended on his readiness to criticise; education must not only prepare the individual to be attentive to his surroundings and adjust to them; it must also make him capable of changing them.

b. Individual fulfilment

But while development continued of the theme of school-community interdependence and, accordingly, of the need for schools to take account of socio-economic requirements, the older theme of the personal fulfilment of the child and adolescent still held fast, subdued but deeply rooted. Inevitably this demand conflicted with the former, in a way which might be regarded as very troublesome from a short-term viewpoint; in the long term, however, the conflict seems less acute than it does at first sight, in a society which claims to have "development" as its aim. I shall return to this later.

So widespread is the concern to highlight individual fulfilment in the work undertaken under the auspices of the CCC, that it hardly needs emphasising. Suffice it to say that even on the occasion of a symposium on occupational mobility, held at Montreux in October 1975, it was stressed that mobility cannot be considered solely from the angle of productivity, but must constitute a new direction for the human personality. Vocational training, it was said, "must give young people the possibility to work at some trade, but it must also teach them how to fulfil themselves as individuals and members of society, and hence to satisfy the aspiration of every human being, which was to "be somebody" (8).

Here again, no doubt, the concept of permanent education will make it possible to resolve the old conflict between those who advocate personal fulfilment and those who stand for adjustment to society. In according a central position to self-training, that is to say taking charge of oneself by oneself, and by making learning a process of autonomous acquisition and not of "breaking in", permanent education may well give us the answer to the conflict between the socio-economic environment and education, a conflict that is never far from the surface of our debates (9).

The development of ideas on adult education has been decisive here. Referring, in a report on adult education, to the "crisis of civilisation" that occurred at the end of the sixties, Mr. Henri Janne finds that new demands are coming to light. He states: "Instead of a means of adjustment of man to society [adult education] becomes an instrument for arousing an increasing sense of awareness and liberation in man and, in some cases, an instrument for changing the environment itself. From the idea of man "product of his society", one moves to the idea of man "producer of his society" (10).

c. The school as a vehicle of change

For many, it is not sufficient for schools to adjust to change. Schools, they say, should give themselves structures, and conduct activities designed to facilitate or accelerate the acquisition of behaviour forms whereby individuals may influence the community and give direction to change.

An example of this type of intervention is provided by the problem of work by women. A policy to extend work opportunities was advocated early in the seventies, partly for economic reasons (women recruits provided a pool of labour for an expanding economy), and partly in order to uphold the principle of sex equality. Schools were urged to arrange for diversified training opportunities for girls, and to organise child-minding facilities; "in particular, attention should be paid to the availability and operating hours of suitable forms of day care and nursery education"(11).

The creation of community schools is a further example of how the school can be used as a vehicle of change. These are somewhat more spontaneous experiments conducted for the most part by the teaching body itself, for the purpose of bringing the school into a closer relationship with the community it serves (invariably a socially and culturally deprived community) and so act as an instrument of social change from within (12).

In both of these examples, the school institution is, as we can see, urged to go beyond its traditional educative mission and organise itself so as to act, directly or indirectly, on its environment. The first type of action remains within the traditional bounds of what society expects from educational institutions, although even here difficulties can arise in certain neighbourhoods, if no consensus has yet been reached on the new roles women should play in our society.

The second raises more problems, in so far as the institutions and teachers concerned are required to undertake a type of action and intervention for which they are unprepared and not properly organised.

Matters become still more complicated when we move from the concept of equality to the concept of participation, in the name of which schools have been urged to make institutional and pedagogical arrangements for creating a new type of social relationship, or even of radically transforming the structures of society. I have already pointed out the extent to which matters of this kind, on which there appears to be agreement on a purely verbal level although they are in fact fundamentally controversial, can make the position of schools and teachers uncomfortable.

But what of the concept of socio-cultural community development ("animation") to which the Council of Europe has devoted so much effort? It is a subject that we shall discuss in greater detail further on. For the time being, we shall simply note that the concept of socio-cultural community development leads to a considerable broadening of the role of education by establishing a new relationship between education and social services. No doubt it has long since been the objective of our schools to give each member of the community the type of training that will enable him to turn his citizenship to good account. What is new, in this case, is the belief that they can only perform this duty by first removing the psychological and cultural obstacles that hamper the effort of advancement (13). To do this, they have to share all the preoccupations of the community.

The school is assailed from all sides, and the demands on it are increasing. Ultimately, the school is expected to influence the individual and penetrate his social environment in such a way as to give him a training and allow him to acquire behaviour forms which will enable him to change not only his own life but that of the community as well.

d. Permanent education and the "learning society"

The time is indeed long past when the school institution regarded itself as a haven of peace and serenity, sheltered from the backwash of the century, and was accepted as such. While the trend I have just described seeks to place it at the core of our problems, another trend seeks to draw it into the very centre of the community.

Here, the concepts of permanent education and recurrent education have played an essential part.

It was in 1966 that the CCC held its first policy debate on permanent education. A working party was set up and studies were commissioned. Fifteen such studies were published in 1970 in a volume which can be said, without exaggeration, to have made a historic mark in the study of this issue (14). The main contributions relevant to our subject are those of H Janne (Permanent education, an agent of change), B Schwartz (A prospective view of permanent education), J A Simpson (Permanent education and community development), HH Frese (Permanent education, a strategy of social action) and H Jocher (The future shape of permanent education).

All these documents seem to me to have been inspired by a common belief: the school cannot remain fragmented or isolated. Education must constitute a single system all parts of which, from the infant school to adult education, must interact; also, it must root itself firmly in society.

Henri Janne sees the disappearance of the multifarious and compartmentalised educational establishments of the present and their replacement by "centres for the dissemination of knowledge and culture"; Simpson and Frese emphasise the role of education as a factor of social change and community development; while Jocher remarks that education has become the steering mechanism of the social system and must therefore adjust to its function in that system.

This central idea was very aptly summed up in the title of a document published in 1971, in which all the research done in the field within the Council of Europe was reviewed: "Permanent Education - Fundamentals for an Integrated Educational Policy". This report, written by Mr B Sxhwartz, was adopted by the Council for Cultural Co-operation at its 20th session, and serves as a starting point for a series of projects consisting mainly of the analysis of experiments in progress in various countries, conducted under the supervision of a "Steering Group on permanent education".

There are two noteworthy features here: the attempts to discern the outlines and content of a coherent and integrated education system capable of meeting the needs of society and reconciling these with the aspirations of individuals; and the extremely important idea that any educative action must "start from the experience of the person being taught, and his 'problem

situations'" (p. 14). This idea has implications of two kinds for our present subject: starting from experience and the problem situations implies that education must in future find, in the life actually lived by the learner, that is to say in the socio-political context, both his point of departure and his point of arrival: this is because the ultimate aim is to stimulate interest in training and a demand for it, through the clarification and solution of problems arising out of personal experience; but a further consequence is that the community's conflicts are going to erupt into the school. Is this a reason for taking fright and retreating? The report has chosen to tackle the problem head on by recommending that education should comprise a form of training designed to help the individual cope with situations of conflict.

In the volume on permanent education published in 1970 by the Council for Cultural Co-operation, a new idea is already beginning to emerge: that of recurrent education, which is the subject of a study by Ulf Larsson of Sweden. It is designed for a new purpose: to meet the demand for a fairer division of funds between "traditional" education and adult education. One consequence of the raising of the school leaving age is that the older generations who provide the resources are at a disadvantage by comparison with young people with regard to their standard of education and training.

The Swedish Minister of Education presented a paper on this subject to the 6th session of the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education (Paris, 1969).

OECD, too, has given the problem some thought. A report by Denis Kallen and Jarl Bengtsson, published in 1973 under the title of "Recurrent Education - a Strategy for Lifelong Learning" draws attention to the notion implicit in recurrent education: namely, that educational problems are not solved by educative means only, but demand social, political and economic changes.

Resolution No. 1 adopted by the Ministers of Education at their 9th session (Stockholm 1975), where the principal item on the agenda was recurrent education, takes much the same stand. The Ministers recommend "the introduction of arrangements for the co-ordination of education, social welfare and employment policies" and for consultation between management and labour (15).

Combined with demands for equality and solidarity, the concept of recurrent education obliges us to adopt a new approach to the problems of teaching, by the challenge it presents to the standards and structures that traditionally govern the way in which relations are established between school life and working life, between the school and society.

But already we are invited to take a further step. For the concepts of permanent education and recurrent education lead us straight to the concept of the "learning society" which has such a major role in the UNESCO publication entitled "Learning to Be".

For the time being, the "learning society" is only a dream, a society conceived in terms of a grand design: not simply to educate all men, but also to educate, within each being, everything that can make him a man in the full sense of the term; a society which is aware that cultural values constitute an asset which grows when it is shared.

The advent of the learning society "can only be conceived as a process of close interweaving between education and the social, political and economic fabric, which covers the family unit and civic life. It implies that every citizen should have the means of learning, training and cultivating himself freely available to him, under all circumstances, so that he will be in a fundamentally different position in relation to his own education. Responsibility will replace obligation.

In this light, tomorrow's education must form a co-ordinated totality in which all sectors of society are structurally integrated. It will be universalised and continual. From the point of view of individual people, it will be total and creative, and consequently individualised and self-directed. It will be the bulwark and the driving force in culture, as well as in promoting professional activity. This movement is irresistible and irreversible. It is the cultural revolution of our time" (16).

We are, in fact, dealing here in the long run with culture, a culture that is created day by day by the contribution of each individual. "The word culture, taken in a new and broad sense that encompasses everything which elevates life", to repeat Pierre Emmanuel's definition (17).

True, the concept (or as some will say the myth) of the "learning society" does not solve everything. One will not put an end to the old debate on school/society relations simply by hoping that education will invade society.

But at a time when it is so often said, and rightly so, that the school is the mirror of society, can one claim that it is nonsense to assert that everything must be done to ensure that the whole community serves education?

CHAPTER III : AN ANALYSIS GUIDE

The number of documents of all kinds prepared and published under the aegis of the Council of Europe in the last five years (studies, symposium and working party reports, resolutions etc.) in which the problems of relations between the school and society are discussed from a theoretical and practical standpoint, can be estimated as at least fifty.

To comment on them one by one, or even to make a list of the most interesting contents, would be too tedious. It would, I think, be more helpful to try to take an overall view of the considerable contribution which these documents have made to the study of the main theme of the Tenth Session of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education, by compiling an analysis guide with the subject matter they offer. Such an analysis guide could also serve as a reading guide.

I shall start with two preliminary remarks.

The first concerns the combination school/community. To talk of schools and communities is to relate two terms that can be used on several levels. "School", in our arguments, can stand for the school system as a whole (as when we say : "the school is in need of renovation"), or an element of that system (as in the sentences : "the secondary school should give greater prominence to technology" - "the rural school has special problems"), or else an entity considered as an institution, (as when we state, for example, that "every school must be a democratic community").

Similarly, "community" can refer to society as a whole (for example : "the school's objectives are those of the community"), or the sum total of inhabitants of a particular geographical area (for example : "the school must take account of the particular features of the community it serves"), or again a group of persons united by special links (for example : "a school designed for a community of a particular religious persuasion").

It is necessary to bear these different meanings in mind if we wish to make ourselves clearly understood. Obviously, there will in fact be an intercrossing of relations between the school and the community. A school's relations with the community in the broad sense may differ from its relations with the local community. Also, it may well be more attentive to the requirements of the former than to the demands of the latter.

The second remark is this : a guide is significant only if the elements that make it up can be interpreted and be given meaning by means of a decoding system. In the case in point, this can only be a system of values. The types of relation that exist between the school and the community can be judged, desired, welcomed or rejected only in terms of the objectives that one assigns to training. It is with reference to a certain number of aims and ends regarded as desirable that it will be possible to give an opinion on the practical measures proposed, and recommend one type of relationship rather than another.

I think I can state, from my reading of the texts, that there is a broad measure of agreement with the idea that any training scheme, of whatever standard and in whatever circumstances, must aim to enable the learner to acquire behaviour forms comprising, to varying degrees, the following characteristics :

- open-mindedness (readiness to revise one's frame of reference)
- creativity (ability to invent original solutions and new behaviour forms)
- commitment (taste for action, and the consequent acceptance of risk)
- autonomy (ability to take decisions after a personal assessment of the situation)
- responsibility (a sense both of the intrinsic value of one's acts and of the need to place them in a social context of a particular breadth)
- freedom (ability to create opportunities for assuming real freedom in practical situations)
- socialisation (interest in social life, readiness to seek collective solutions to problems and assume responsibility in community management)
- personal fulfilment (optimum, balanced development of one's being)
- effectiveness (possession of knowledge and abilities, and a capacity to invent behaviour forms for solving the problems of life, not least on the professional level)

The classification that I propose here makes no claim to be "neutral" in every respect. While it may seem, in some cases, to be the result of a taxonomic approach (for example, "open-mindedness" may be regarded as a condition for "creativity"), in others it implies a scale of priorities established in terms of social and ethical options : for instance, it is not insignificant that "autonomy" comes before "socialisation" and "personal fulfilment" before "effectiveness".

As to the guide itself, it will comprise :

- vertically, a list of groups concerned with the development of the school :
  1. Teachers and trainers
  2. Pupils and students
  3. Parents
  4. Authorities
  5. Outside groups
- horizontally, a list of subjects for consideration and research, covering a wide field of interests :
  1. The school and social change
  2. Preparation for working life
  3. New items of knowledge and new techniques
  4. Extension to all sections of society
  5. The school and its environment
  6. Preparation for social and political life
  7. The school as a community
  8. Adult education
  9. Socio-cultural community development ("animation").

With this guide, it should be possible to get to the heart of the problem of the relationship between the school and the community.

The appendix contains a list of documents on our present subject published by the Council of Europe. We thought it helpful to classify them in chronological order and to indicate the particular subjects dealt with in each.

SCHOOL

system
sub-system
institution

and

COMMUNITY

society as a whole
local community
group

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	The school and social change	Preparation for working life	New items of know-ledge and new techniques	Extension to all sections of society	The school and its environment	Preparation for social and political life	The school as a community	Adult education	Socio-cultural community development ("animation")
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aims and purposes

open-mindedness - creativity - commitment -
autonomy - responsibility - freedom -
socialisation - fulfilment - effectiveness

CHAPTER IV : EDUCATION FOR TOMORROW'S WORLD

Once a society has become aware of the accelerated pace of scientific and technological progress and the rapid increase in its own capacity for producing goods and services, and has, as it were, staked everything on change, it can be expected to urge its education system to help sustain and amplify the pace of "development" that it wishes to impress on all sectors of activity. This is the phenomenon that has been occurring for the past 15 years. Great pressure has been exerted on schools to convince them of the need to change their structures, curricula and teaching methods for the purpose of :

- increasing the opportunities for education (raising of the school-leaving age, wider intake for study courses after that age);
- reducing the number of those who, because of a "handicap" cannot benefit from the "normal" education system (socially and culturally deprived communities, migrants etc.);
- meeting new requirements with regard to pupil guidance (reappraisal of curricula and of the importance of know-how);
- enabling individuals to adopt a constructive attitude to change.

a. The school and social change

All this is not without ambiguity, as I have already pointed out, for our societies are by no means in agreement as to the pattern of change that schools should promote.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that reform is not proceeding in a serene and orderly manner. Blame is readily laid on the structures (for being unwieldy) and the teachers (for resisting innovation). While there may be some truth in these accusations, it would be over-simplifying the problem to say that it is all the schools' fault.

While everyone readily agrees that educational reform is desirable, we are far from unanimous as to the practical measures to be taken. Many of us are inhabited by several people. Someone who flies into a passion, in a general way, in demanding a reform, is likely to become more cautious later on when he finds himself a family man or when nostalgic memories of younger days haunt him. Which goes to show that the distinction between "opinion", "attitude" and "behaviour" must be clearly drawn.

In fact, there is no consensus about educational innovation in any of our societies, but generally only conflict.

It is all too easily forgotten that, for this reason, any reform is likely to introduce an element of conflict into the school. As Bertrand Schwartz (18) aptly remarks, the school is quite naturally a place where :

- there is conflict between the aspirations of the individual and the requirements of society;
- there is conflict between the educational system and the elements that make up society, owing to the fact that society is not homogeneous.

Added to this, there is, in a society dedicated to change and development, a further potential conflict. The introduction of forecasting in debates on education immediately raises such questions as : what type of man is to be trained? And what type of society? In the early stages, it seemed, no doubt, to be simply a matter of extrapolating from present trends. But that did not last long. Support very soon came to be given to the idea that the future should not be awaited but shaped according to will. This conviction underlies many of the documents prepared in connection with the two major projects on permanent education and socio-cultural animation.

But anyone expressing the wish, or the demand, that education should be based on and directed by an image of the future man in terms of a certain vision of a society that has yet to be created, is implicitly demanding that the school should occupy the centre of our socio-political battlefield.

It is therefore not suprising that a series of alternatives very often emerge on the fringe of our schemes for the school of the future; is the school a liberating or a manipulating influence? Should it be concerned with personal fulfilment or social integration? Is its task to guide or to provide the conditions for autonomous development? Should the teacher be, in a sense, a representative of the social conscience or must he do what he thinks is right?

These are all serious, difficult and fundamental questions because they touch on the legitimacy of the educative act.

Do we possess the necessary elements for answering these questions?

b. Preparation for working life - new elements of knowledge

From among the activities of the Council of Europe concerning curriculum content and the ways in which it must adjust to life's new demands and the requirements of professional activity, I propose to single out the following : the Pont-à-Mousson Symposium ("Factors in primary and secondary education which determine the effectiveness of further education in later life" - 11-17 January 1972; the Luxembourg Symposium ("The introduction of new elements of knowledge into upper secondary education" - 4-8 November 1974); the Montreux Symposium ("How, and to what extent, technical and vocational education can encourage occupational mobility"-6-11 October 1975); a collection of articles on technological education (1972); studies on the technology of education by Mr. Schorb (1974) and Mr. Flechsig (1975); the Social Committee's papers on work by women (1972-74); vocational guidance for young people (1973); and the studies on permanent education and adult education, in particular those by MM. B. Schwartz and H. Janne (19).

These documents all share a single concern which we can sum up in the words: mobility, flexibility, adaptability. But these objectives cannot be attained if education does not aim to promote a type of training incorporating such features as autonomy, responsibility, the ability to make personal choices and take decisions, a capacity for setting oneself targets and seeing oneself as part of a total complex, and the ability to use initiative and take charge of one's own affairs, in particular those relating to one's training.

There is therefore, to some extent, a coincidence between the type of man that emerges from the needs of a society motivated by change and development and the new significance which the concept of personal fulfilment assumes for teachers.

In addition to this, three major themes are constantly at work throughout the studies, recommendations and resolutions of the Council of Europe: democracy, participation and equality. Here too, the vision is implied of a changing society aiming to turn each of its members into a free, responsible being capable of full participation in social life. And participating fully in social life does not mean choosing a solution once and for all: it means taking part in a never-ending search. In short, it is not just a question of wanting a future, but of agreeing to build that future in a situation of uncertainty.

This presupposes a set of behavioural qualities and characteristics that are summed up in a single series of words : autonomy, responsibility, creativity, commitment, socialisation.

The conditions of economic development, social aspirations and political necessities all combine to a large extent to require the education system to train a type of man and woman capable of assuming behaviour forms centred on a series of values that I listed and attempted to define in Chapter III : open-mindedness, creativity, commitment, autonomy, responsibility, freedom, socialisation, personal fulfilment, effectiveness.

c. Self-training and participation

The first question that immediately arises is : can people be educated for autonomy and freedom, and if so how ?

The answer, to my mind, is to be found in one of the key concepts that emerge from the thesis on permanent education, namely the concept of self-training.

Education is bound to appear constricting, if it regards its duty as being to transmit a "closed" culture, that is, to teach facts, techniques and behaviour as a set of solutions that have proved successful or are considered as compulsory. But an open society also demands an "open" culture; culture being a method of approaching and solving problems; and teaching, a means of providing the type of training necessary for finding solutions.

The school can then become a liberating and emancipating influence, because its role is no longer to condition individuals so that their conduct complies with certain standards; its role is, on the contrary, to teach individuals the techniques through which those standards are constructed or invented.

There remains a second problem : how to reconcile autonomy with social cohesion, or again, how to provide training both in commitment (and peronal conviction) and in comprehension (and concerted action) ?

Here, the concept of participating assumes its full value and significance, because it engenders teaching methods that offer practice in confrontation in a spirit of mutual respect; through shared work and dialogue, personal solutions are sought together, while at the same time a minimum framework for comprehension is built up, a minimum consensus through which community life is possible.

Because our pupils and students are called upon to live in a society that tends to institutionalise competition between individuals and groups, there is much to be gained from teaching them how to discern common lines of action, in the face of opposition and conflict.

d. Keeping within bounds

Thus, even if they do not provide a theoretical solution, the concepts of self-training and participation at least offer ground for agreement and action in the search of formulae to reconcile apparently contradictory objectives : freedom and learning, individualism and adjustment to society.

Even so, the type of society towards which we are heading confronts the teaching system with new, sensitive problems. While society exerts on the school pressure to renovate - an intense pressure which may at times appear disorderly - it does give the school more autonomy in so far as the latter is developing in a society which is itself feeling its way.

In fact, we find some very subtle interplay between the society and the school : each must feel how far it can go without running the risk of causing a harmful break. For society cannot take the liberty of wrecking a complex institution that always reacts slowly, and sometimes very badly, to the stresses upon it. But the school, for its part, must take every precaution to gain the approval of the various groups and communities for the reforms that it devises under the pressure of circumstances and in compliance with the new values which emerge through the interplay of social relations. Its initiatives are often brought to an abrupt halt.

Life is, indeed, a battle of doubtful outcome.

CHAPTER V : WIDENING THE SCHOOL'S SPHERE OF ACTION

In the course of the movement that started before the 1939-45 war and which gathered strength and momentum in the period from 1955-60, society demanded that its systems of education should widen their sphere of action.

The first stage was to bring about quantitative democratisation of education by offering access - at secondary level at first - to children of less privileged backgrounds who showed themselves to be gifted.

The flow then began to swell; in most European countries, the school-leaving age was raised, either by law or in practice, to 16. Problems of qualitative democratisation then began to arise; schools were invited to take steps to adapt their structures and modes of action to the specific needs of their new pupils.

In this way new concepts have come into being, and we have tried to translate them into practical action : consideration for affective aspects, pupil guidance (giving greater depth and refinement to vocational guidance), diversified structures, differentiation and individualisation of teaching.

a. Extension to all sections of society

In recent years, attention has centred on the educational handicaps caused by socio-cultural differences. The contribution of the Council of Europe has chiefly concerned three points :

- the compensatory role of education (20)
- the education of migrant workers' children (21)
- experimental community classes (22).

How can the contribution of these studies to our present problem be concisely presented ?

First, some facts : the school, in confronting the under-privileged with new demands, very often complicates their problems; they are not familiar with this particular method of coding and decoding which is a feature of the culture upheld by the school. Any effective action to transmit culture must therefore start with the recognition of this difference; education stands a greater chance of being profitable if it is based on the child's actual experience, takes his assets and personal structurations as a starting point, and takes account of his systems of values.

The school must therefore, as it were, take support from the differences. This applies to migrant workers' children, but also to the others, because, in any culture, there are sub-cultures to be taken into account. Also, difference is not necessarily a sign of inferiority, and it is necessary to examine the features characteristic of children from socially and culturally deprived families, in order to single out those which stand in the way of development and those which simply betoken divergence from a standard.

One further point : it is often said to be necessary, if the academic problems of the under-privileged are to be solved, to devise enrichment

strategies. Such strategies require particular attention to be given to psychological problems which, in turn, can be dealt with only by knowledge of the family and social background, and even by action on that background.

Several reports on the experimental special classes for migrant workers' children give great emphasis to this point, and other more general experiments confirm it (23): knowledge of, and respect for, the person's background are indispensable, and much valuable help can be obtained by stimulating the family and its surroundings.

Research workers, psychologists and sociologists agree on this conclusion: the school must realise that, in some cases, the effect of its action is to cause a break with a code that the child has built up in the course of inter-action with his family and social environment. This break is more likely to be successful if there is some continuity between the school and the family, and if the school succeeds in penetrating the environment.

The school is therefore required:

- pedagogically, to substitute the concept of equality of success for that of equality of opportunity, to accept differences and divergencies and to base its action on them ;
- sociologically, to penetrate its environment, establish contact with the child's family and neighbourhood and try to cooperate with them in its efforts for cultural stimulation.

b. The school and its environment

Thus another step forward has been accomplished.

For a time, the school was expected to open its doors to the outside world so as to base its teaching on the pupil's real experience and, as I said before, to get to know the pupils better, and design its modes of action in such a way as to take account of their specific psychological and social features.

Before long, the concept of the "open school" (24) ceased to encompass the new requirements, and a concept of "community school" began to have its advocates. Several documents describe schools of this kind in Great Britain and Ireland (25). The objective here is not simply to take charge of the pupil but also to have a influence on the neighbourhood. The school is tending to become "a focal point and a beacon for its whole community" (Michael Mason). This presupposes a transformation on the part of the school, but also on the part of the neighbourhood itself which "must become a place where the patterns of life conduce to confident, free activity and communication" (idem). There is then set up a process of exchange between the school and the community, which join forces, experience the same problems and together seek ways of solving them.

School buildings must be designed for community use. The Council of Europe has been taking an interest in this aspect of the question for a long time. Being requested by Resolution No. 4 of the 5th Conference of European Ministers of Education (Vienna, October 1965) to undertake specific action in regard to school buildings, the organisation embarked on a study in co-operation with OECD. This activity, which included the Ottenstein Conference (1968) and the Leiden Conference (1969), provided the background for a report prepared by Mr Pearson and published in 1971. This report comes out in favour of the community schools. For example,

on page 11, we read: "The most effective and economic use of resources and devices may require a complete change in the concept of a school. It may become a centre of educational, social and information services rather than an organised system of classes". And on page 17: "Within the framework of social institutions, school is rapidly extending its role to cover not only the pupils' instruction, but their whole welfare and well-being ... . School facilities are also used to further the education and extend the interests of adults and, increasingly, the school becomes the focus of community life".

The leaders of the permanent education project come to the same conclusion: "integrated centres" must be created to combine such facilities as: school, apprenticeship or vocational training centre, guidance centre, socio-educational centre, library, cultural centre, sports club etc (26).

In describing his socio-cultural community development projects for Icksville, Mr J A Simpson (27) envisages the participation of educational establishments through the organisation of programmes designed to enrich local public life (courses in social work - organisation of exhibitions and public performances etc), but also to give students an opportunity to take part in the study of the region's socio-economic and political problems.

It is the concept of socio-cultural community development ("animation") which drives the demands made on the school to the utmost limit. Our schools are very much concerned with the personal development of the pupils: autonomy, a critical faculty and the ability to take charge of one's own problems are among the behaviour forms that schools set out to teach; but, while they no longer take refuge in an illusory neutrality, it is a fact that the schools still keep their distance from the outside world, and especially the immediate outside world, and therefore tend to wait until the learner leaves school before giving him the chance to apply his knowledge and know-how to practical matters. The concept of socio-cultural community development requires the education system to take the community's problems to heart, stimulate awareness of those problems, assist in subjecting them to a critical appraisal and so become, through action in the field, agents of education for community development and direct vehicles of change.

c. Preparation for social and political life

We expect our education system to encourage pupils to fit into a democratic society, and become citizens of that society capable of assembling information, forming opinions and taking decisions in a spirit of tolerance and respect of for others.

What part do our schools play here?

In 1974, the Council of Europe published an important study by Mr Bonney Rust (28) which is in fact an inventory of everything that is done in member states of the Council of Europe in the field of social and civic education. The author discusses a number of questions of principle. If social and civic education is included in our teaching curricula, at secondary level especially, it cannot be said to have found an adequate place in the timetable or to have achieved what might be regarded as adequate effectiveness. Ideas do not appear to be very clear as to the possible content of such programmes, nor as to the attitudes that social and civic education might aim to make the pupils adopt.

Mr Bonney Rust shows how vague the aims of social and civic education are in most countries. He adds: "If a culture pattern is transmitted by the schools, this transmission is rarely through a carefully designed and precise teaching programme. It arises primarily from the unconscious absorption of patterns of behaviour and patterns of thought from a teacher who has himself unconsciously absorbed these patterns from his mentors. The socialisation progress is 'caught' rather than taught" (pages 16-17).

The ambiguous nature of the relations that exist between the school and the community is well emphasised by 2 examples of reluctance.

One concerns the dangers of indoctrination. It is clear that many educators are careful not to appear as propagators of an official doctrine or to express views that the government might have as to the civic qualities to be inculcated in its nationals. On this level, at least, anti-state feeling still runs high in Europe. Do the present-day methods and attitudes of teachers shelter the pupils from any type of implicit "indoctrination"? That is another matter, as Mr Bonney Rust quite rightly points out.

The other example of reluctance concerns the discussion of political problems in schools; in fact, these are controversial social problems which are, by definition, the most up to date, the most difficult to treat, but also the most interesting.

I quote Mr Bonney Rust again: "The major fear of educationists is, of course, that the education service may be used as a 'brain-washing' technique to give advantage to a government in power or to introduce revolutionary or anti-social ideas which may disrupt society. A similar fear of opposition political parties is that the education service is already used covertly (but not overtly) to maintain support for the existing order" (page 115).

Are we then to use mutual suspicion as a pretext for immobilism?

And yet, despite difficulties and reservations, everyone acknowledges that preparation for social and political life must be one of the school's major tasks.

"Learning to be" (UNESCO) contains the following passage: "Education in democracy can no longer be separated from the practice of politics. It must equip citizens with a solid grounding in socio-economic matters and sharpen their judgment. It must encourage commitment and vigorous action in all spheres of individual concern and endeavour - politics, public affairs, trade union activities, social and cultural life - and help them to retain their own free will, to make make authentic personal choices ..." (page 102). And further on: "To exclude politics from the school is to deny and contradict (as a principle and in practice) what people in general usually profess: that schools are a constituent of the 'Polis', the city, and that relationships between the two should be a as close as possible" (page 151).

Is there not therefore some chance of finding a practical solution to this tricky problem? To my mind, it is entirely a matter of intelligence and method. The question is whether there can be developed sufficiently, in our communities, the awareness and belief that, in a rapidly changing society which tries to devise political, economic and social structures for itself, capable of ensuring optimum development of a kind determined by the citizens in a democratic institutional framework, the essential objective of the teacher and the teaching system is no longer to impose or even propose solutions, but to offer a form of training that can enable the learner, in a process to which the individual and the community both contribute, to find the best possible answers to previously identified

and circumscribed problems. This belief is then backed up by another, namely active respect for others, a conviction that leads us to desire others to be themselves, that is to be what they can make of themselves in a sustained and determined effort to achieve authenticity.

Such a state of mind, which should be the driving force behind any real and living democratic organisation, will soon render useless the attempts at manipulation and brain-washing that some may be tempted to make. It will lead us to develop a pedagogy of research and confrontation, on the basis of which it will be possible to devise a method which, besides being valid in a general way, will give us particularly useful returns in social and political education.

In order to ensure that this form of teaching can outgrow the stage of inward-looking, abstract patterns, it must be accompanied by a campaign to engage young people in social activities and by educative action rooted in the community's real problems. A further ingredient is the practice of participation in the school itself. But this is the subject of the next chapter.

d. Questions and problems

Considerable pressure is therefore being exerted within our societies to bring schools into close contact with their environment. Are the schools ready to accept all the implications of this? And have they the means?

Teachers, it is true, are not reluctant to centre their work on a study of the neighbourhood and to derive a good proportion of their subject-matter from it. The use of school buildings for community activities is a principle that has been applied in practice in a good many places, and it should not be impossible to extend it at a steady rate. That is a matter of money and staff.

But it is obvious that any campaign to take matters further will run up against great difficulty. The reports of previous experiments provide ample evidence of this.

I do not propose to dwell on staffing difficulties. Given sufficient funds, it is likely that, in time, the staff can be given the necessary training and relieved of some teaching duties in order to have time for other activities; and that new functions centred on community development can be created within the school. Already, we are beginning to accumulate an impressive series of conditions. The project is not unrealistic. The question is whether we are willing to pay for it.

More serious are the obstacles that can come from outside the school. The reports (on open schools, community schools, and experimental classes for migrant workers' children) do, it is true, show how schools and parents can benefit mutually from co-operation; but they also show how difficult it is for such enterprises to become established (in urban centres for example), to spread and, especially, to keep going. In our consumer society the public demands services, but is on the whole unwilling to make the effort to participate in the management and development of those services. In addition, our communities do not appear to the sociologists who study them to be dynamic units determined

to take a clear view of their problems and to solve them. They give the appearance of being divided and incoherent, and the elements of which they are composed waver between sluggishness and violence, between anomie and dissent. This being so, the involvement of school facilities in the life of a community is not without risk, and the reluctance of teachers is understandable. One can understand why some of them feel tempted to draw attention to the fact that the school cannot perform its compensatory role effectively without a fundamental reform of the structures and mentality of society. They are surely not wrong. But reforms of society can start at either end, often at the one which seems less likely.

One can therefore acknowledge, with hope, the conviction of a few.

CHAPTER VI : THE SCHOOL AS A COMMUNITY

How can our schools hope to establish varied, competent and fruitful relations with their neighbourhoods, derive much of their instructional and educational material from the neighbourhood, and become vehicles of its development, if they do not organise themselves as living, determined, structured and effective communities ?

They will not carry through this perilous exercise successfully and live in harmony with a neighbourhood that has its ever-increasing and ever-changing demands, unless they themselves achieve sound internal harmony. But, in the school as elsewhere, the old balance has been destroyed. As in all other areas, the manner in which authority is exercised is challenged, and the type of relationship questioned.

Although many would claim that they had been aware of the problem and had taken measures long before the events of 1968, the "May uprising" was decisive in setting in motion a process of reform.

a. Participation

The key-word here has been "participation'. Fundamental to this is a new conception of how society is managed - a conception that broadens and deepens the practice of democracy, with the result that some authors, in referring to it, use the expression to "socialise power" (29).

Until recently, democracy was conceived as a system by which those responsible for running the political machine could be elected, replaced and kept under supervision. In recent years, the feeling has spread that democracy is a sort of attitude that must infuse all relations between citizens. Thus the concept of the democratic state has been superseded by that of the democratic <u>society</u>. In other words, it is no longer simply a question of running the state, but of running society in general. Furthermore, the features of this attitude which is to guide human relationships are dialogue, confrontation of opinion, shared responsibility and participation in decision-making.

What is being questioned is not simply the way in which authority is acquired, but also the way in which it is exercised; it is no longer enough to elect and replace the stewards of the political bodies; structures and situations must be created to enable all citizens to manage society together, starting in the areas in which they are directly concerned: the firm, government service, the school, etc.

It is in this general context of ill-defined aspirations and vaguely formulated demands, of unrest and confrontation, that schools have had to decide what the concept of participation could mean and imply for them.

But at the same time, a further phenomenon came to light in this general reappraisal : young people were not particularly sensitive to the concept of participation; the most active of them were drawn more towards attitudes of dissent, while the mass took refuge in abstention. Young people in our societies tend to constitute a non-integrated mass without any power to act within the community, and often remain distant from it. Everything that is provided for

them by their elders and by the authorities, including the creation of a specialised market in consumer goods and services, only helps to make them a separate class, a special social group, with its own particular mentality, its own lifestyle, its own leisure pursuits, its own meeting-places, its own radio and television broadcasts, its own newspapers, modes of travel, music, etc.

"Shut up and look pretty" is an expression that describes women's estate better than any number of speeches. Similarly, our attitude to youth could be summed up in the phrase "Be young and leave us to run things".

The results are familiar to us. The attitude of youth hovers between dissent, often felt by adults to be systematic and destructive opposition, and indifference, all too readily interpreted as a sign of passivity or evasion of reality.

Those who, in Europe, have been working to introduce a system of participation into our schools have realised, as the report of the 1973 Brussels Symposium shows, that the difficulties of young people are to a large extent due to their inability to find their place in society, establish themselves there and become self-reliant.

The solution is not, of course, to be found at school. The school is not society, and it is up to the local community or society as a whole to create structures to facilitate dialogue with young people and their gradual association with the management of the social institutions. What the school can do is to prepare for insertion and participation. It can provide education designed to encourage and enable people to take their place in society, play a part there, and remodel it according to their aspirations. But is not the best way of teaching a type of relationship to practise it oneself ? Surely we learn to act by acting, and not by learning precepts by heart ?

Thus everything has combined to make the school take the move towards participation very seriously. As a result, a strong current has developed which has led to the introduction in schools of experimental structures of administrative and pedagogical management, with a fourfold purpose :

- to make the school a community, fitted with structures that ensure both confrontation of opinions and cohesion, and encourage personal commitment and hence the motivation for learning (pupils), working (teachers), and cooperating (parents) ;
- to create relationships within the institution, and give the pupils responsibilities, of a kind that can turn schooling into a practical apprenticeship for living or, better still, an important part of the pupils' lives, lived in a positive fashion ;
- to provide a form of training that enables each student to become an active citizen, determined to tackle community affairs in a constructive manner ;
- to enable relationships between the school and its neighbourhood, and even between the school and society as a whole, to be managed on a sound institutional basis by re-creating, through dialogue, confrontation and joint decision-making, the consensus over aims and the harmony of

relations that used to exist between the school and the community, when things were simpler and when neither the society nor the school had experienced the feeling of confusion engendered by their reappraisal of their own and each other's objectives.

b. The rough and the smooth

Participation was thus seized upon in the hope that it would prove a means of confronting the difficulties inherent in the crisis of society and in the crisis of education.

In hope, and in haste ...

Most European countries have taken administrative steps to encourage the creation of participation structures. Some have even issued laws or regulations.

This is the case of France, for example (Decree of 8 November 1968, revised in 1969 and 1971), Italy (Act No. 477 of 30 July 1971 and No. 416 of 31 May 1974), Austria (Act of 1 September 1974) and Finland (1975 Act).

"In the Italian educational system the chief aims of participation are to transform the school into a 'democratic community', to intensify the school's educational action through contact with the society of which it is part, and to ensure that participation itself becomes a lasting feature of individual behaviour and a means of self-expression within society" is how the Italian document begins (30).

The Swedish document points out that there is "the demand for what is termed institutional democracy, whereby personnel, pupils and parents are enabled to exert influence on, and assume responsibility for, school activities together with the school management" (31).

The Finnish document, for its part, notes : "In the statement for reasons for the Act, school democracy was defined as a new kind of organisation for the school's internal work which aims at promoting the educational tasks of the school" (32).

These texts - and I could have chosen others - give an idea of the aims that are being pursued :

- to bring about fundamental educational reform touching on the teacher-pupil relationship and on working methods and designed to enable the pupils to assume responsibilities and to achieve autonomy and adulthood more rapidly ;
- at the same time, to restore confident and fruitful relations with the neighbourhood ;
- to offer (and none too soon!) genuine social and political training.

But while the general desire for participation that grew up in European society round about 1970 is deep-seated enough, as Mr. Ferir (33) points out, it must be admitted that achievements in that direction neither come up to expectation nor do justice to the efforts that have been made.

Those efforts have been obstructed from all sides : from the school facilities, where structural adjustments are difficult to make, from the authorities who do not readily surrender even a portion of their power; from the pupils and students who fear what looks to them like new machinery for "brain-washing" or manipulation; from head teachers who feel that their status is threatened, from the teaching staff who find everything needlessly complicated; and from parents who cannot always subordinate their personal concerns to the general good.

The obstacles to the introduction and operation of participation machinery are partly technical and partly - I would say mainly - psychological. And the great danger is that some people will be all too ready, in their haste, to write off the whole enterprise as a failure. Do they really expect a reform of this scale and depth to succeed overnight, without the slightest hitch? Here, therefore, the role of education can be crucial.

Encouragingly, it seems to me that participation continues, despite a certain diminishing of interest, to be a problem central to our education systems. It is no exaggeration to say that none of the reform measures, great or small, that we recommend can ever become fully effective until schools have succeeded in replacing relations based on carrying out orders by relations founded on combined effort directed towards the completion of a project that everyone has helped to define.

For the observer, the participation venture is doubly interesting.

First of all, it offers a perfect example of the obstacles that any innovation encounters in its development if it aims to get at the root of things and to transform attitudes and behaviour forms. It shows us that specific difficulties cannot find their solution in the traditional teaching techniques. For we are not dealing here with knowledge or even with "know-how", but with learning-to-be.

The rough and the smooth of participation provide us with ample evidence that any decisive step towards educational reform requires the teacher to be fully conscious of the need to accept a new conception of his role. It is no longer sufficient for him to be an educator. He must become a trainer and a community developer.

Participation began as a social aspiration; society turned towards the school and required it to take inspiration from that idea both in its organisation and in its teaching, so that what was a vague hope might become practical reality in everyday life. Participation has since become an educational objective which, through the behaviour forms it tries to promote, the techniques it seeks to teach and the needs it engenders, cannot fail to have an influence on the social context.

Participation is therefore a good example of school/community interaction.

CHAPTER VII : ADULT EDUCATION

Adult education has without doubt proved the most stimulating sector of activity over the past 10 years, with regard both to renewal of the conception of education and to development of ideas on school-community relations.

There are two areas of concern which underlie the greatly increased interest in adult education over the past 10 years.

One has developed from the growing awareness of the rapid evolution of science and technology and of the need to devise a system of continuing further education. This has forced us to revise our ideas on ends and means in adult education.

The other element originates in the realisation that the success of any educational campaign depends on the learner's capacity to establish positive links with a number of values which develop in relation to the socio-economic and cultural context. To remedy the lack of motivation and to overcome attitudes of reluctance, it is therefore necessary to break down the cultural barriers which prevent the individual from raising his sights to a certain level of aspiration. This was the origin of the concept of socio-cultural community development ("animation").

a. Adult education

Early in the sixties, adult education expanded considerably. Its range of objectives was also extended. In addition to its original function, which was to give a second chance to people who had been deprived of normal schooling, two further aims were discerned:

- to update knowledge previously acquired;
- to provide a form of training enabling the individual to cope with change and re-establish contact with reality.

This broader objective gave rise to the term "permanent education" (34). But as it developed, the concept took on a considerably wider meaning and, by 1968 or 1969, was used to refer to a total system of education enabling each individual, of whatever age, to make use of educational facilities.

I referred in Chapter II to the important place that this concept has occupied in the work of the Council of Europe.

Where our subject is particularly concerned, the influence of the concept of permanent education has been noticeable in two main directions.

Firstly, it has introduced a wholly new conception of the school, which is now regarded as part of a potentially integral part of a wider system of education. In a document published by the CCC, we find the following, now classic, definition: "The concept of permanent education, as the organising principle of all education, implies a comprehensive, coherent and integrated system designed to meet the educational and cultural aspirations of every person in accordance with his abilities. It is intended to enable everyone throughout his life, whether through his work or through his leisure activities to develop his personality" (35).

In the past, the school was regarded as a coherent entity, a closed and finite starting-point from which one could go out into life equipped with a stock of knowledge of durable and constant value. Today, it has to be seen as a beginning, an opening on to a lifelong educational undertaking. Hence the reappraisal of the encyclopaedic approach, the importance attached to the acquisition of instrumental means (logical-mathematical operations, observation and discovery techniques, problem formulation, hypothesis elaboration and verification etc); the tendency to replace the notion of "general culture" by that of "general training", and the success of such terms as "learning to learn", "mobility", "flexibility" etc.

Hence, too, the fundamental change in the position of the school vis-à-vis the community. Education is not just the prerogative of the privileged places schools used to be; it is now the concern of the whole society and can therefore take various forms. Once it has become part of a whole greater than itself, the school is bound to live in close touch with society.

Augmented by ideas derived from the concept of recurrent education, permanent education leads us to conceive of a system involving alternation between work and the school in which professional experience can be taken into account to determine the school career and where very flexible relations can, as a rule, be established between work and training.

In the second place, adult education has led us to identify the concept of self-training which, as I said in Chapter IV, permits us to reconcile two educational imperatives that for a long time appeared contradictory: personal fulfilment and adjustment to society.

But this concept has yet other dimensions and other consequences. Self-training is inseparable from self-management in training or, at least, from participation in such management. Self-management in training in turn requires the educational design to take account of the way in which the training institution operates, as well as the institution in which the result of that training will be put to use: a firm, neighbourhood, company etc. (36).

Self-training therefore requires the pupils to be involved in a process of research into the objectives of education, a process involving a reappraisal of society and of the school's role and function in it. As we can see, the development of adult education has led us to reconsider the school-pupil-society relationship and to abandon stale controversy based on a hypothetically insurmountable conflict, in favour of a dialectic approach. School, pupil and society are three interacting variables, whose harmonious development depends on a balance between two complementary elements: autonomy and socialisation.

b. Socio-cultural community development ("animation")

Adult education allowed us to perceive that the system of values to which an individual refers can be a virtually insurmountable obstacle to his academic success.

For that reason, it is not always enough to place educational facilities at the disposal of those who wish to use them. It may be necessary to work on the learner first in order to identify the conditioning influences to which his background has subjected him.

This belief gave rise to the idea that the traditional forms of education should be augmented by action, both more direct and more general, aimed not at training in the strict sense, and certainly not at teaching, but at facilitating learning by "helping to remove the various impediments it encounters (mental, emotional, methodological, social etc)" (37).

The purpose is to stimulate dormant abilities, to bring out latent strength, to distance the learner from his situation, stimulate his awareness and incite him to act on the environment: this is what animation means.

The word "animation" makes it quite clear that the purpose is not to hand out "culture" as such and allow everyone, however recalcitrant, to have a share; it is to bring a culture to life out of all that the members of the group have revealed to themselves about their hopes, fears, desires and hates, at the instigation of the "animateur". It is, in short, to create the conditions for free choice.

It appears that culture, in a modern sense, is regarded less and less as a legacy of which one has to partake, and more as a construct to which each member of the community contributes his share.

In this way, the concept of socio-cultural animation, or community development, took shape and inspired much of the Council of Europe's published work from 1970 onwards.

In a declaration adopted by the CCC at its 29th session (19 to 23 January 1976), each government is urged to:

"1. Allow all sections of the population to be in control of the processes of change which affect them, by means of a coherent policy for socio-cultural community development;

2. Accelerate the implementation of the measures it is taking to do away with inequalities of a social or geographical nature in relation to access to culture; ..." (38).

All these ideas, studies and research projects on socio-cultural animation combine with those on permanent education and the compensatory role of education, to draw the school into the social arena and give it a central position within the community.

Community schools and open schools are schools which, in certain fields, feel themselves called upon to bring animation to their environment. Thus, as Mr J A Simpson has said, they are concerned to enlarge freedom, become vehicles of social change and contribute to the achievement of cultural democracy (39).

But the concept of cultural animation brings in its wake another idea: that teaching is, after all, only part of a larger complex and that any education policy must, if it is to be effective, fit into the broader framework of socio-cultural policy.

The aim of this policy will be to achieve cultural democracy, which "is based on the principle that the individual must be able to develop all his potentialities in total liberty through action in solidarity with others" (40).

CHAPTER VIII : TRENDS AND PROBLEMS

1. Can one venture to describe the "model" to which present-day school/community relations conform in our societies ?

   We find, on a first approach, that our schools have two faces, one looking towards the past and the other contemplating the present.

   On one side, they are subjected to the force of tradition. As the direct and often nostalgic heirs to the late 19th century school tradition, burdened with ideological reminiscences and structural impediments, they are tempted to take up a position on the edge of society and, what is more, to consider themselves as guardians of a prestigious culture with a mission to convey whatever can be saved of it; this sometimes puts them on the defensive when the permanence of certain curricula or the rigidity of certain methods are called in question.

   But for the past fifteen years, they have also been subjected to strong social pressures to "update" their subjects of study and types of training. Sometimes, they are even required to anticipate the future.

2. The model must therefore take account of the fact that the school is divided between three interacting currents which are also found among the public (for the public too is very divided). These currents also exist in every one of us :

   a. A current which sees the school as a vehicle for the values of the past (for example: a "classical" conception of humanism, a liking for "noble" disciplines, a respect for subjects of study as autonomous units handed down from ancient times, an elitist view of education etc.).

   b. A current which seeks to bring it closer to the present-day world, and take account of its demands and values (for example: relationship with working life, and the importance attached to concepts such as general training, mobility and creativity).

   c. A current which urges the school to prepare for a new culture and a different society. (For example: the importance attached to the value of autonomy, responsibility and commitment, and the tendency for a "closed" culture to be superseded by an "open" culture).

   This the school is, at one and the same time, backward-looking, up-to-date and forward-looking; some accuse it of turning its back on the past too hastily, others of lacking the will to innovate, and still others of being all too eager to follow fashion.

3. The relations that the school maintains with society as a whole are different from those it maintains with the local neighbourhood.

4. Society in general is dynamic and glorifies change: open-mindedness, adaptability, mobility, flexibility, creativity and effectiveness become the most highly-prized values. This is a factor that incites the school to take part in building up a new, living culture, centred on finding a place in the modern world (especially with regard to two of its components, namely economic activity and work) and directed towards expansion and development.

5. But this society has negative aspects : environmental deterioration, faceless urban life, stress, excesses of commercialism etc. This causes the development in certain milieux, and particularly among young people, of a "counter-culture" which may find a favourable response in the school and, paradoxically, enable the school to reformulate an internal consensus on its marginal position in relation to society.

6. For the time being, therefore, the school is in a confused and difficult situation where both its external and internal relations are concerned, because it has to combine fidelity to tradition with a feeling for new imperatives, an understanding of certain expressions of rejection and of future-oriented aspirations. Everything is subject to negotiation. Nevertheless, purely on the level of principle, it does find some consensus in respect of a few key-words : equality, freedom, solidarity, personal fulfilment.

7. A move is in progress to increase the number of the school's contacts, associations and connections with society : schools, we incessantly demand, should not only show concern for life but also go out to meet it. The idea is taking root that the problems they encounter cannot be genuinely and lastingly solved within the restricted educational circle, and that concerted action on several planes at once and within a more general framework is necessary. Hence the emergence of the notion of a socio-cultural system of which education is one of the elements. Signs are beginning to show of a belief that education policy must fit into a wider setting, that of socio-cultural policy.

8. By drawing the school into the social and political field, society has put an end to the image (which was, in any case, fictitious) of education as something neutral, objective and on a higher plane than the contingencies and vicissitudes of practical living, being concerned wholly with interpreting the eternal values. At the same time, society has made the school a place in which conflicts grow up. Our schools, like our societies, are divided.

9. Our societies are not homogeneous entities. Currents of all kinds run up against each other in complex interplay. True, they immerse themselves in a particular ideological climate, since social relationships are commanded by the type of organisation that governs economic activities; but those types of organisation and relationship are contested by increasingly large sections of the population. Furthermore, by virtue of their primary choice, our societies must, in a sense, institutionalise conflict as a source of economic vigour : hence the acceptance of pluralism where both choices and values are concerned.

   Because of this situation, our schools have quite a large margin of freedom vis-à-vis society. In so far as they are subjected to various pressures, they can and indeed must assume a degree of autonomy.

10. In this way, schools maintain highly complex relations with society, in which harmony combines with opposition, and conflict with convergence. As I mentioned in Chapter V. these relations could become dialectic, constructive and enriching if we were capable of making the most of all the opportunities offered by two key concepts : participation and self-training.

The concept of participation must enable the school to assume structures for solving its internal conflicts in a dynamic fashion and for regulating constructively its relations with its environment. Self-training gives the school an opportunity to resolve the age-old opposition between personal fulfilment and the needs of social life, between the need to encourage autonomy and the need to prepare for socialisation, between a love of freedom and a sense of collective action.

11. While society appears, on the whole, dynamic, the neighbourhood presents disturbing signs of restlessness, sluggishness and deterioration. Human relations are becoming scarcer and of poorer quality; community life is on the way out.

It seems that our societies have become aware of the dangerous implications of this state of affairs for the balance of society and for the balance of mind of individuals. Everywhere, measures are being taken or planned to restore the local and regional communities' sense of their importance and their role. The watchwords are devolution, decentralisation and even autonomy.

12. Interest in the neighbourhood is thus increasing, and schools are urged to fit it into their curricula and even use it as a starting-point and centre-piece of their activities.

The aim is to develop a type of instruction based on concrete elements, and also to show young people how rich their environment is in resources of all kinds, and how enriching human relations can be in that environment.

13. In its relations with the neighbourhood, the school has two basic problems. In the first place, the attention it has given to the demands of society has caused it to develop a uniform model which overlooks the local and regional aspects of its action. Secondly, the fact of having taken as a model the child and culture of a particular social class, sets a limit to the effectiveness of its cultural action among a large section of the school population.

The school is frequently urged to put these two matters right. There is a strong current of opinion which maintains that the school should have more autonomy and at the same time demands that it should be attentive to the special features and needs of the neighbourhood (level of socio-cultural development, economic situation etc.).

14. The school, at this level, is expected to take its place in the neighbourhood, know its problems, give particular aid to the underprivileged, concern itself with the economic situation, promote cultural activities and enrich social life. In short, it has to become an agent of community development.

This task, it is thought, would be better accomplished if the school were part of an integrated centre of social and cultural services, a meeting-place, a rallying-point, and also the point of departure for socio-cultural development campaigns of all kinds.

15. The old debate over the advantages of centralisation and the benefits of decentralisation may assume more precise significance; it is a question for the school of being at the centre of a twofold structure enabling it both to adjust its action to the special needs of the neighbourhood and to take part in the machinery whereby society as a whole achieves cohesion, compensates for inequalities and protects minorities. We must appreciate that this requires a thorough study of the institutions that must be set up if a dynamic and balanced dialectic tension is to be engendered between centralisation and decentralisation.

16. Lastly, there is a wide consensus both in regard to school-society relations and with regard to school-neighbourhood relations, where the aims of education are concerned. These aims are expressed in the values that I enumerated in Chapter III. They are : open-mindedness, creativity, commitment autonomy, responsibility, freedom, socialisation, fulfilment, effectiveness.

These values imply that a balance be sought between personal fulfilment and collective action, since the latter specifically requires cooperation in the joint determination of fundamental options acceptable to the community and the participation of citizens in all aspects and levels of the management of society.

These are just words, no doubt, and probably do not mean the same thing to everybody. But they are promising words which may, in combination, enable the school to recover its internal balance and its position in the community, and to open new avenues whereby men and women will find greater opportunities for the practical exercise of freedom.

NOTES

(1) See for example : Arnould Clausse, "La relativité éducationnelle", Labor, Nathan, 1975 (especially Book I, Chapter II and Book II, Chapter III).

(2) Conference on the Development of Democratic Institutions in Europe. Summary of the work of Commission II : "Education policies and democracy" - report by Mr. Bernard Crick, page 5.

(3) Idem, page 3.

(4) Bertrand Schwartz : "Permanent education - Fundamentals for an integrated educational policy". Council of Europe, Committee for Out-of-School Education, Strasbourg, October 1971, page 10.

(5) Maurice Reuchlin : "Pupil guidance - facts and problems" - Council for Cultural Cooperation, Strasbourg, 1964.

(6) Symposium on "Factors in primary and secondary education which determine the effectiveness of further education in later life" - Pont-à-Mousson, 11-17 January 1972. General report by Mr. F. Lebouteux, page 1.

(7) Idem, page 40.

(8) Symposium on "How, and to what extent, technical and vocational, education can encourage occupational mobility" - Montreux, 6-11 October 1975, Committee for General and Technical Education.

(9) See also George Wiel : "Education permanente et éducation scolaire", in "La pédagogie au 20e siècle", Privat, 1975.

(10) H. Janne : "Organisation, content and methods of adult education. Interim report" - Committee for Out-of-School Education and Cultural Development, May 1976.

(11) This subject is discussed, for instance, in the report and resolution adopted by the Social Committee (Partial Agreement) on "Work by women, particularly in the light of technological progress, including automation" (Council of Europe, 1972-1974).

(12) See the study by Michael Mason : "The school and the socio-cultural development of the community", Committee for Out-of-School Education and Cultural Development, Strasbourg, 12 December 1974.

(13) On this subject, see also :

J.A. Simpson : "An integrated policy for socio-cultural community development" - Committee for Out-of-School Education and Cultural Development, 29 August 1974.

W. James : "Socio-cultural needs in education" - Committee for Out-of-School Education and Cultural Development, 3 March 1976.

(14) Permanent Education - A compendium of studies commissioned by the Council for Cultural Cooperation - A contribution to the United Nations International Education Year, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 1970.

(15) See also : "Permanent education - A framework for recurrent education : Theory and practice", Council of Europe, 1975.

(16) "Learning to be", UNESCO, page 163.

(17) P. Emmanuel : "Pour une politique de la Culture", Seuil, Paris, 1971, page 67.

(18) "Permanent education - fundamentals for an integrated educational policy", Council of Europe, 1971, page 9.

(19) See in particular :

B. Schwartz :

- "A prospective view of permanent education", 1970
- "Permanent education - fundamentals for an integrated policy", 1971
- Steering Group on Permanent Education - Revised analysis guide - Notes to clarify the underlying assumptions, 1974.

H. Janne :

- "Organisation, content and methods of adult education", 1976.

(20) Particular reference should be made in this connection to the workshop organised in Strasbourg from 7-11 November 1974, a study by Mr. Decoster (19 November 1975) (CCC/EGT (75) 24) and a report by Mr. Dell'Acqua on an experiment conducted in Milan (1976) (CCC/EGT (76) 6).

(21) The following may be mentioned in this connection : the ad hoc Conference of European Ministers of Education held in Strasbourg in November 1974, a study by Mr. Louis Warzee on the training of teachers (CME/IX (75) 7), and especially the numerous reports produced in 1973 and 1974 on experimental special classes for migrant workers' children organised in various localities with the help of the Council of Europe.

(22) Reference may be made to :

- Michael Mason : "The school and the socio-cultural development of the community" (December 1974)
- J.A. Simpson : "Socio-cultural community development for a common type of housing area" (February 1975)
- B. Schwartz : "Report on the visit to the comprehensive and community schools in Ireland (June 1975)
- W. James : "Socio-cultural needs in education" (March 1976),

and the report by the Council of Europe on " "The educational aspects of school building, 1971.

(23) See : "De l'éducation compensatoire à une pédagogie insérée dans son contexte social", by A.N. Thirion and J.F. Pourtois, in "Education compensatoire", 1975, page 36 et seq., and the studies by Mr. Decoster and Mr. Dell'Acqua mentioned above (20).

(24) This concept is relevant to experiments such as those conducted in Villeneuve de Grenoble (France) and Hamburg (Federal Republic of Germany).

(25) See the studies by Michael Mason and W. James mentioned under (22), and the report on the visit to the comprehensive and community schools in Ireland, presented by B. Schwartz (CCC/EP (75) 4 of 9 June 1975).

(26) "Permanent education - Fundamentals for an integrated educational policy", page 36.

(27) "Socio-cultural community development for a common type of housing area" - CCC/DC (74) 93 of 6 February 1975. Icksville, as its name suggests, is an imaginary town.

(28) European Curriculum Studies No. 9 : Social and Civic Education, by W. Bonney Rust, Council of Europe, 1974.

(29) The term is used by W. James in : "Socio-cultural needs in education", pages 2 and 7.

(30) Document DECS/EGT (75) 37 of 16 June 1975, page 1.

(31) Document DECS/EGT (75) 94 of 9 December 1975, page 1.

(32) Document DECS/EGT (75) 56 of 29 July 1975, page 2.

(33) G. Ferir : "Participation in education in Europe", Council of Europe, 1977.

(34) See in particular the book by Henri Hartung : "Pour une éducation permanente", Paris, Arthème-Fayard, 1966.

(35) CCC, XIIth Session, 5-9 June 1967 : Working Party on Problems of Permanent Education - CCC (67) 3.

(36) H. Janne : "Organisation, content and methods of adult education - interim report", 1976.

(37) J.J. Scheffknecht : "The tutor", 1975, page 10.

(38) Document DECS/Inf (76) 2 of 25 February 1976.

(39) J.A. Simpson : "An integrated policy for socio-cultural community development", 1974, page 20.

(40) Marcel Hicter : General report for the Symposium on the deontology, status and training of animateurs, 1974, page 3.

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